

**THE RIVERSIDE LITERATURE  
SERIES. IN THE  
WILDERNESS: WITH A  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

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The Riverside Literature Series. In the Wilderness: With a Biographical Sketch by Charles  
Dudley Warner

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**CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER**

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*The Riverside Literature Series*

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# IN THE WILDERNESS

BY

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

*WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH*



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## CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

LIKE Mr. Aldrich, who played with his boyhood in *The Story of a Bad Boy*, Mr. Warner has treated himself as a sort of third person in *Being a Boy*, the scenes of which are laid in a primitive Massachusetts country neighborhood. The place which stood for its portrait in the book is Charlemont, near the eastern opening of the Hoosac tunnel. Here Mr. Warner spent his boyhood, removing to the place, when his father died, from Plainfield, in the same State, where he was born September 12, 1829. He was five years old when he was taken to Charlemont, and he remained there eight years, and then removed to Cazenovia, N. Y. His guardian intended him for business life, and placed him after his school days as clerk in a store, but his intellectual ambition was strong, and against all adverse fates he secured a collegiate education at Hamilton College, where he graduated in 1851. His college many years later conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Letters.

When he was in college he showed his bent for literature by contributing to the magazines of the day, and shortly after graduating compiled a *Book of Eloquence*. For the next half dozen years he was busy establishing himself in life, choosing the law at first as his profession, but really practicing the various pursuits which should finally qualify him for his predestined vocation as a man of letters. He spent two years in frontier life with a surveying party in Missouri, mainly to secure a more robust condition of body; he lectured, did hack work, wrote letters to journals, looked wistfully at public life and oratory, opened a law office in Chicago, and took what legal business he could find.

It was while he was there living by miscellaneous ventures that J. R. Hawley, formerly Senator from Connecticut, was attracted by the letters which Mr. Warner was contributing to his paper, the *Hartford Press*, and invited his correspondent to remove to Hartford and become assistant editor of the paper. This was shortly before the opening of the war for the Union. When Mr. Hawley entered the army, Mr. Warner became editor in chief; and when the *Press* became merged in the older and more substantial *Courant*, he became one of the proprietors and editors of that paper.

In that position he remained until his death, although in his last years he was relieved from much of the office work of an editor. It was in connection with his journalistic duties that his first real stroke in literature was made. He was busy with the political discussions in which the press was involved, and most of his writing was of this sort. But his morning recreation in his garden suggested to him the relief of writing playful sketches for his paper, drawn from this occupation, and the popularity attending them led to a collection of the sketches in the well-known volume *My Summer in a Garden*.

In 1868 Mr. Warner went to Europe for a year and turned his travel-experience into sketches which were gathered into *Saunterings*. This was the beginning of his more distinctly literary life. He found his pleasure as well as his recuperation thereafter chiefly in rambling and in noting men and things. The more distinctive of his books of travel growing out of this habit were *Baddeck and That Sort of Thing*, which is a humorous sketch of a journey in Nova Scotia and among the scenes of Longfellow's *Evangeline*; books of eastern travel, *My Winter on the Nile* and *In the Levant*; rambles chiefly in the Spanish peninsula under the name *A Roundabout Journey*, and a number of papers relating to American life and scenery gathered into the two volumes *Studies in the South and West* and *Our Italy*.



a warm eulogy of southern California. A genuine love of nature bore rich fruit in the Adirondack sketches *In the Wilderness*, which form the contents of this present volume.

By a natural transfer of his own habit into a more purely literary expression, Mr. Warner wrote a book, half story, half travel, entitled *Their Pilgrimage*, which carried several characters from one watering-place in America to another, enabling him thus to sketch manners and make observations in a light, satiric vein, on some phases of American life. This venture it was that led him probably into the more positive field of fictitious literature, and he produced *A Little Journey in the World*, which, under the guise of story, was really a serious inquiry into the tendencies of social life when affected strongly by the insidious influence of wealth, especially newly-gotten wealth. The publication of this novel led to the writing of two other novels, *The Golden House* and *That Fortune*, published at intervals of a few years. These novels carried forward some of the inquiries started in *A Little Journey in the World*, and the reappearance of certain characters, with a further delineation of their experience, gives the three books something of the form of a trilogy.

For several years Mr. Warner held an editorial position on *Harper's Monthly*, and many of his contributions were made to that magazine. The light, suggestive essay, best illustrated by his *Backlog Studies*, is perhaps the form of literature with which he is most identified, but the serious side of his nature is never held distinct from the humorous, as the vein of humor also runs through his more solid work. His interest in literature was always very strong, and led him into the delivery of some forcible addresses at college anniversaries and into the editorship of the *American Men of Letters* series, to which he contributed the volume on Washington Irving, who was his first great admiration in modern literature. He also conducted, as editor in chief,

the extensive work entitled *Library of the World's Best Literature*. His interest in literature and travel was not that of a dilettante. His humor is scarcely more prominent than his earnest thoughtfulness, and he gave practical expression to his thought in the part which he took in public affairs in Hartford and in the moving question of prison reform.

Mr. Warner died in Hartford, Conn., October 20, 1900.

## HOW I KILLED A BEAR

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So many conflicting accounts have appeared about my casual encounter with an Adirondack bear last summer, that in justice to the public, to myself, and to the bear, it is necessary to make a plain statement of the facts. Besides, it is so seldom I have occasion to kill a bear, that the celebration of the exploit may be excused.

The encounter was unpremeditated on both sides. I was not hunting for a bear, and I have no reason to suppose that a bear was looking for me. The fact is, that we were both out blackberrying, and met by chance,—the usual way. There is among the Adirondack visitors always a great deal of conversation about bears,—a general expression of the wish to see one in the woods, and much speculation as to how a person would act if he or she chanced to meet one. But bears are scarce and timid, and appear only to a favored few.

It was a warm day in August, just the sort of day when an adventure of any kind seemed impossible. But it occurred to the housekeepers at our cottage—there were four of them—to send me to the clearing, on the mountain back of the house, to pick blackberries. It was rather a series of small clearings, running up into the forest, much overgrown with bushes and briars, and not unromantic. Cows pastured there,